

# 1. Parish: Saxmundham

**Meaning:** Seaxmund's meadow/enclosure

2. **Hundred:** Plomesgate

**Deanery:** Loes (-1914), Saxmundham (1914-)

**Union:** Plomesgate

**RDC/UDC:** (E. Suffolk) Plomesgate R.D. (1894-1900), Saxmundham U.D. (1900-1974), Suffolk Coastal D.C. (1974-)

Other administrative details:

Blything Petty Sessional Division  
Framlingham and Saxmundham County Court District

3. **Area:** 1,101 acres land, 6 acres water (1912)

4. **Soils:**

**Mixed:**

- a. Slowly permeable calcareous/non calcareous clay soils, slight risk water erosion
- b. Some permeable seasonally, waterlogged, some calcareous, clay and fine loam over clay
- c. Deep well drained sandy soils, some very acid, risk wind erosion

5. **Types of farming:**

1086		12 acres meadow, 2 cobs, 30 pigs, 80 sheep
1500-1640	Thirsk:	Wood-pasture region, mainly pasture, meadow, engaged in rearing and dairying with some pig-keeping, horse breeding and poultry. Crops mainly barley with some wheat, rye, oats, peas, vetches, hops and occasionally hemp. Also has similarities with sheep-corn region where sheep are main fertilising agent, bred for fattening, barley main cash crop
1818	Marshall:	Wide variations of crop and management techniques including summer fallow in preparation for corn and rotation of turnip, barley, clover, wheat on lighter lands
1937	Main crops:	Not recorded
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet

**6. Enclosure:**

**7. Settlement:**

1975 Railway crosses parish, in central position, from N-S.  
Small market town development around central church.  
Scattered farms.

**Inhabited houses:** 1674 – 75, 1801 – 103, 1851 – 233,  
1871 – 288, 1901 – 347, 1951 – 474,  
1981 – 822

**8. Communications:**

Road: To Rendham, Kelsale, Benhall and Knodishall  
Town stands on main London–Yarmouth road.

1844 Coaches: from the Bell Inn  
– London 9 evening, 11 morning  
– Yarmouth 6 morning, 3 afternoon

from the Angel Inn  
– London 9 morning  
– Halesworth 6 evening

Omnibus to meet London steamers at Ipswich Monday,  
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

Carriers to London Monday and Thursday  
to Aldeburgh Tuesday, Wednesday and  
Saturday  
to Ipswich Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,  
Friday and Saturday  
to Norwich, Bungay and Halesworth  
Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday  
to Yarmouth Tuesday and Friday

1912 Carriers to all parts

Rail: 1891 Rail station: Saxmundham–Aldeburgh line opened  
1859, lined to Aldeburgh closed for goods 1959,  
closed for passengers 1966. Spur from Saxmundham  
to Leiston still operational  
Ipswich–Lowestoft line opened 1859 still operational

**9. Population:**

1086 – 31 recorded  
1327 – 42 taxpayers paid £3 12s. 7d.  
(includes Benhall and Farnham)  
1524 – 32 taxpayers paid £3 15s.  
1603 – 113 adults  
1674 – 96 households  
1676 – Not recorded  
1801 – 855 inhabitants

**9. Population (cont'd):**

1831 – 1,048 inhabitants  
1851 – 1,180 inhabitants  
1871 – 1,292 inhabitants  
1901 – 1,452 inhabitants  
1931 – 1,260 inhabitants  
1951 – 1,438 inhabitants  
1971 – 1,709 inhabitants  
1981 – 2,379 inhabitants

**10. Benefice: Rectory**

1254 Valued £5 6s. 8d.  
1291 Valued £6 13s. 4d.  
1535 Valued £8 15s. 10d.  
1831 2 curates, stipend £114 p.a. Glebe house. Gross income £280 p.a.  
Incumbent also holds rectory of Kelsale with Carlton and Rectory of Thorington  
1835 Valued £275  
Tithes commuted for £283 17s. p.a. 1834  
1844 Good rectory house + 11 acres glebe  
Rectory house built 1869  
1891 40 acres glebe  
1912 Nett value £188. 29 acres glebe and residence  
  
Patrons: Michael Hare (1603), Mrs. Long (1831), William Long (1844), W.E. Long (1912)

**11. Church St. John Baptist**

(Chancel, clerestoried nave, aisles, organ chamber, vestry, W. tower)

1086 Church + 15 acres. 2 churches + 24 acres land and ½ plough  
14<sup>th</sup> cent. W.tower  
14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> cent. S. aisle, N. aisle (1851), Clerestory  
W. side formerly held S. porch  
1308 Swann chapel built  
1643/44 Puritanical Vandals (William Dowsing) removed 2 superstitious inscriptions in brass  
1873 Restoration. Clerestory rebuilt  
1908 Vestry added  
  
Seats: 450 (1915)

**12. Nonconformity etc:**

1597 7 shopkeepers accused of opening their shops on the

Sabbath

1 innkeeper accused of allowing musicians to sing, play and dance in his house during the time of evening prayer  
Independent (Congregational) chapel rebuilt 1850 seats 400 1912

Baptist chapel built 1854

1891 Wesleyan Methodists use Juvenile Old Fellows Hall.  
Seats 100 1912

Particular Baptist chapel 1912 seats 200

Salvation Army hall 1912 seats 150

'Saxmundham', History of Congregationalism in Suffolk by T.J. Hoskens 1920, p.226

### 13. Manorial:

1066 Manor of 140 acres held by Norman

1086 Manor of 140 acres belonging to Roger Bigot and held by Norman

#### Hurts/Hurtz/Hurt's Hall

1066 Manor of 2 carucates 40 acres held by Algar a thane of King Edward's

1086 Manor of 2 carucates belonging to Roger Bigot

1336 Sir John de Wingfield owns (linked to Sternfield, Fressingland, Stradbroke, Syleham, Wingfield and Framlingham)

1388 Sir Michael de la Pole owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)

1408 Held of the Castle of Framlingham by Knights service

1546 Sir Nicholas Hare owns (linked to Winston, Bruisyard)

c.1650 John Base owns

Late 17<sup>th</sup> cent. Charles Long owns

1909 William Evelyn Long owns (linked to Sternfield)

#### Sub-manors:

#### Murkets/Saxmundham Market

1273 John de Ramseye owns

1311 Thomas de Verley owns

1347 Sir John de Wingfield owns (absorbed by main manor)

1510 Sir Robert Brandon owns (linked to Henham and Wattisfield)

1609 Thomas Johnson owns

1673 Nicholas Sheppard owns

1724 Deborah Brame owns

c.1778 Charles Long owns (re-absorbed by main manor)

#### Swan's

1308	Robert Swan owns
1377	Consisted of messuage, 60 acres land, 3 acres meadow and pasture, 2s. 6d. rent
1408	Michael de la Pole owns (absorbed by main manor)
1508	Sir George Nevil, Lord Bergavenney owns (linked to Otley)
1515	Charles Brandon owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
1764	Dudley North owns (linked to Sternfield, Blaxhall and Farnham)
c.1778	Charles Long owns (re-absorbed by main manor)

#### **14. Markets/Fairs**

1271/72	Grant of market and fair to John de Ramseye
1348	Grant of fair to Sir John Wingfield to be held on Hurts Hall Manor
1310/11	Grant of market and fair to Thomas de Verley to be held on 7 acres in Saxmundham on Ascension Day
1679	Described as 'little market town' with 'pretty full market on Thursdays'
1759	Fair held on Holy Thursday and September 23 <sup>rd</sup> for toys
1792	Market held on Thursday
1844	Large corn market held on Thursday Corn Exchange/Market Hall built (1842/43), improved (1846) used as corn market Fair for toys and pedlery on Whit Tuesday and Fair for hiring of servants on Thursday week prior to Old Michaelmas Day, obsolete by (1891)
1891	Fairs on Whit Tuesday, August 18 <sup>th</sup> (for lambs) and last Thursday in September (for pleasure) Corn market held on Wednesday (formerly held on Thursday – 1854) Cattle sale held on alternate Wednesdays. Large yearly lamb sales in June, July and August
1912	Market on Wednesday for grain. Cattle sales on alternate Wednesdays. Lamb and sheep sales June, July, August

#### **15. Real property:**

1844	£2,580 rental value
1891	£5,335 rateable value
1912	£6,979 rateable value

#### **16. Land ownership:**

1844	William Long, principal owner
1891	Land sub-divided
1912	W.E. Long, principal owner

**17. Resident gentry:**

1843 William Long, High Sheriff of Suffolk  
1891 Col. W.M.B. Long JP  
1912 W.E. Long JP, Maj. C.F. Pretor–Pinney JP, J.C. Ryder–Richardson MA, MB, BC., E. Towers JP

**18. Occupations:**

1500–1549 1 mason, 1 smith  
1550–1599 2 yeomen, 2 weavers, 1 tailor, 1 clothworker  
1600–1649 2 tanners, 1 innholder, 7 yeomen, 2 joiners, 5 husbandmen, 1 carpenter, 1 collar maker, 1 labourer, 1 oatmeal maker, 1 butcher, 1 saddler, 1 shoemaker/cordwainer, 3 spinsters, 1 grocer  
1650–1699 10 yeomen, 1 husbandman, 2 clerks, 1 collar maker, 1 vintner, 1 woollen draper, 1 thatcher, 3 butchers, 2 tailors, 1 fellmonger, 1 saddler, 1 shoemaker/cordwainer, 1 glazier, 2 barbers, 2 glovers, 1 currier, 2 blacksmiths, 1 linen draper, 1 tobacco merchant, 1 grocer, 1 maltster, 1 farmer, 1 mariner  
1831 50 in agriculture, 136 in retail trade, 20 professionals, 6 in labouring, 87 in domestic service, 31 others  
1844 Post office, gardener/seedsman, gunmaker/game dealer, glove maker/glass dealer, cooper, cart owner, bookseller, police officer, bank agent, basket maker, currier/leather cutter, dyer, 2 farmers, tanner, 2 watchmakers, sheriff's officer, attorney's clerk, book-keeper, farm bailiff, bricklayer, coachmaker, upholstress, 3 gardeners, farrier/cow leech, land surveyor, auctioneer, cowkeeper, beerseller, fishmonger, corn miller/merchant, 2 bankers, 5 fire and life agents, 5 inns/taverns, 6 academics, 3 attorneys, 3 bakers/confectioners, 2 blacksmiths, 7 boot/shoemakers, 2 brazier/tinners, 2 brewers, 3 butchers, 3 cabinet makers, 2 chemist/druggists, 4 grocer/drapers, 3 laundresses, 2 ironmongers, 2 joiners, 4 milliners, 2 painters/plumber/glaziers, 2 saddlers, 2 shopkeepers, 2 stone masons, 4 straw hat makers, 4 surgeons, 3 tailor/drapers, 2 whitesmiths, 3 wine/spirit merchants  
1891 Singer Manufacturing Co.  
1912 Postmaster, sub-postmistress, public officers, schoolmaster, stationmaster, shoeing smith, coach builder, shopkeeper, cabinet manufacturer/upholsterer, 2 publicans, registrar, commercial traveller, 2 bankers, income tax assessor, 4 hotel owners, bricklayer, 2 grocers, 2 pork butchers, artificial teeth maker, 2 Gas Co. Managers, cycle agent, midwife, refreshment room owner, 3 bakers, 2 saddlers, 3 surgeons, clerk, 5 solicitors, bill poster/town crier, beer retailer, printer/stationer, 2 fishmongers, painter, 3 builders, 3

butchers, 2 hairdressers, stone mason, coal merchant/carrier, boot warehouse, ironmonger, auctioneer, bank agent, surveyor, inspector of nuisances, blacksmith, 2 clothiers, grocer/draper/outfitter, draper/grocer, chemist/druggist, gamekeeper, boot/shoemaker, pianist, cycle maker, plumber/well sinker, corn/flour merchant, insurance agent, 3 boot/shoemakers, 2 farmers, watchmaker, accountant, tailor, 2 mineral water manufacturers, tobacconist, apartment house owner, fly proprietor, jobmaster/farmer, photographer, 2 cycle agents, school attendance officer, dentist, dressmaker, fancy draper, maltster, fire brigade, motor engineer, confectioner, timber merchant, nurseryman, steam laundry, Dyeing and Cleaning agency, market gardener, carriers, head gardener, insurance agent, wine/spirit merchant, ironmonger, ladies school owner, draper

**19. Education:**

1818 4 boys attend endowed school at Benhall  
2 day schools for boys and 3 day schools for girls (121 attend)  
1 Sunday school for boys (60 attend)

1833 5 daily schools (118 attend), 1 boarding school for girls (14 attend), 2 established church Sunday schools (87 attend), 1 Protestant Dissenters Sunday school (60 attend)  
School built near to church c.1836 by W. Long.  
Education of 70 poor children paid for by W. Long. 170 attend 1891

1844 6 academies  
Infant school situated in Church Street 1891 45 attend

1891 Day and boarding school run by Mrs. R.E. Walker of White House, High Street  
School Board formed 1894, superceded 1903 by school managers  
Public elementary school built 1895 incorporating the infants school, average attendance 1912 235  
Ladies school run by Miss E. Wells at South Holme, Fairfield Road

**20. Poor relief:**

1776 £226 13s. 4d.  
1803 £386 6s. 7¼d.  
1818 £815 1s.  
1830 £715 11s.  
1832 £676 16s.  
1834 £673 10s.

## 21. Charities:

### Town Estate

1840 Former site of Town House (origins circa 1657)  
3 acres meadow/marsh land let at £8. 18s. 6d. applied  
with church rate.

### Charity Land:

1840 5 acres arable land let at £16 5s. p.a.  
5¼ acres (Brook Meadow) let at £12 p.a.  
3 acres let at £5 15s. p.a.  
applied to distribution of bread and coals

### Cobbold's Charity:

1746 by will of William Cobbold: £5 p.a. for education of 4 poor  
children at school at Benhall

### Eade's Charity:

1716 by will of Stephen Eade: £40 p.a. for distribution among  
poor at Christmas

### Clarke's Gift:

1820 by will of Mrs. Alice Clarke: Interest on £50 for  
distribution in coals on New Year's Day

### Crampin's Charity:

1912 Dividends from investment of £2,000 applied to provision  
of coals, blankets, clothing and money to the poor on 31<sup>st</sup>  
December and 19<sup>th</sup> March

## 22. Other institutions:

Corn Exchange and Public rooms built 1842/43, purchased by William  
Long 1846, improved and used as corn market 1891  
Former workhouse converted to cottages for poor 1844  
Workhouse with 60 inmates 1776  
4 Friendly Societies 1803 218 members  
Gas Works built 1848  
County Court held in Market Hall every alternate month 1891  
1891 National Burial and Sick Association (200 members) meets in Juvenile  
Old Fellows Hall  
Fire Brigade (14 members) formed 1875  
Lodge of Old Fellows established 1845 (300 members)  
Juvenile Lodge of Odd Fellows (130 members). Juvenile Old Fellows  
Hall in existence in Fairfield Road. Seats 200.



- Reading Room and Working Mens Club established 1877 in rooms above Infant school (80 members)  
 Rifle Volunteer Corps. (80 members) drill in Market Hall, shooting range at Hurts Hall Park  
 Police Station built 1864
- 1912 Freemason's Lodge  
 Gannon Institute and Reading Room, Station Approach  
 Urban District Council meets in Parish room 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month  
 Petty Sessions held in Market Hall on alternate Thursdays  
 British Red Cross Society: Men's and Women's Voluntary Aid Detachment  
 Saxmundham and District Conservative and Unionist Association  
 Saxmundham Liberal Association  
 Town Hall built 1846  
 Post Office and Telephone Exchange built 1953/54

**23. Recreation:**

- 1648 Innholder recorded  
 1693 Vintner recorded  
 Bell Inn rebuilt 1842/43. Has bowling green to the rear
- 1844 2 brewers  
 The Angel, Coach and Horses, Queens Head, White hart public houses  
 Bell Hotel (posting house and excise office)
- 1891 Lawn Tennis Tournament held annually for 3 days in August on cricket ground at Hurts Hall Park  
 The Angel, The Coach and Horses, Queens Head, Station Inn public house  
 The Bell Hotel and The White Hart Hotel  
 2 beerhouses  
 Railway refreshment room
- 1912 The Angel, The Coach and Horses, The Queens Head Hotel, The Bell Hotel, The White Hart Hotel  
 Beer retailer  
 Bowling Club. Greens at Hurts Hall Park  
 Lawn Tennis Club  
 Quoits Club  
 Rifle Club

**24. Personal:**

Henry Bright 1814–1837: native of Saxmundham, celebrated water-colourist.  
 John Shipp: 1784–1834: native of Saxmundham. Saw active service in India. Holds unique distinction of winning commission from the ranks on two separate occasions before reaching 32 years of age. Also author of military works 'John Shipp of Saxmundham'. East Anglian Miscellany 1909, p.66.  
 'The Path of Glory: Being the Memoirs of the Extraordinary Military Career of John Shipp written by himself'. Edited by C.J. Straunks.

**25. Other information:**

Hurst Hall: Originally built c.1650, rebuilt 1803 by Samuel Wyatt for Charles Long. Destroyed by fire c.1890, rebuilt in Neo-Elizabethan style 1893.

Stands in wooded park of 200 acres 1844. The largest dovecot in Suffolk stands 200 yards from house. Photos of both houses in 'Guide to Country Houses Vol. III' by Burke and Savill.

Fairfield Estate: established c.1891.

Town exhibits 34 public lamps 1891 lit by gas.

Water supply from wells 1912.